



**REPORT of
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**PERFORMANCE, GOVERNMENT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
5 JUNE 2025**

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE - QUARTER FOUR 2024 / 25

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on health and safety statistics and activity during quarter four (1 January to 31 March 2025)

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Members consider the accident and incident statistics and incidences of unacceptable behaviour reported;
- (ii) That Members consider progress of key health and safety themes (as per Section 3.2 below).

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1 Quarter Four (Q4) 2024 / 25

- 3.1.1 There were six accidents and incidents, six near misses and no hazards reported during Q4. All staff-related accidents were of low severity. Three of the incidents involved leaks of fluids such as fuels, oil or water of low volume. Of the six near misses, two involved features or assets within the main offices whilst the remainder concerned scenarios where staff members felt unsafe or uncomfortable in their duties. Some of these events may have been associated with situations involving members of the public but may not necessarily have been classified as unacceptable behaviour, which is recorded separately.

ACCIDENT/ INCIDENT REPORTS Q4 2024 / 25			
Event	Action	Note	Person
10-1-2025 (incident) Whilst training, the wrong controls were activated resulting in damage to the tractor flail arm and a leak of hydraulic oil.	Equipment recovered and repaired. Spill kits granules used to capture spilt oil.	Limiters on equipment were not set to prevent damage. Risk assessments updated to reflect this requirement.	Employee
23-1-2025 (incident) Small volume of diesel found to have leaked from CVS vehicle in office car park (possible overfill).	Sand applied by Maldon District Council (MDC) Facilities Officers to spilt fuel and cleared up.		MDC Partner / Employee
29-1-2025 (accident) Member of staff spilt hot	No first aid required. Injured person ran their		Employee

ACCIDENT/ INCIDENT REPORTS Q4 2024 / 25			
Event	Action	Note	Person
liquid on their hand when moving past another staff member through doorway	hand under cold water.		
12-2-2025 (accident) Member of staff tripped whilst returning from their car to the building (side car park)	First aid given. No defect found in paving. No items in the area.	Accident investigated.	Employee
6-3-2025 (accident) Member of staff received minor abrasions to their legs when they traversed undergrowth whilst undertaking a site visit.	Review of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and risk assessments conducted. Instruction on use of PPE also undertaken.	Accident investigated	Employee
19-3-2025 (incident) Contractor working alone at MDC caused a minor water leak when they activated the wrong valve/tap on pipework.	Closed off and cleared up. Facilities on site and attended after the incident.		Contractor

NEAR MISS / HAZARD REPORTS Q4 2024 / 25			
Event	Action	Note	Person
2-1-2025 (Near Miss). Heat curtain in reception area became detached from the fixings in the ceiling. Unit hanging loose from fixing.	Reception area closed off and unit fixings repaired.	High winds reported during the event. Not clear if this led to the event. Reported as an incident but reassigned as Near-Miss.	Employee
22-1-2025 (Near Miss) Member of housing staff visited a customer at a property where the occupant was later found to be in possession of knives.	Risk assessments for the individual updated with instruction for no lone visits.		
6-2-2025 (Near Miss) During a housing assessment interview, a staff member felt uncomfortable when the customer referred to personal details which are assumed to have been gleaned from private social media accounts.	Assessment meeting ended in a professional manner. Case transferred to another member of staff.	Suspected that the customer had found the officer's details on social media.	Employee
7-2-2025 (Near Miss) Whilst based at the local job centre, a member of staff witnessed abusive behaviour of staff when intoxicated customers entered the premises.	Member of staff allowed to work from home for the rest of the day. Noted that Security staff were in attendance during the incident.	Incident occurred 6-11-2024 but not reported until 7-2-2025. One-to-one with Manager clarified this should be recorded as a Near-Miss.	Employee

NEAR MISS / HAZARD REPORTS Q4 2024 / 25			
Event	Action	Note	Person
7-2-2025 (Near Miss) Whilst based at the local job centre, a member of staff was interrupted in their duties by a member of the public having a psychotic episode	Staff member asked job centre reception staff to remove the individual.	Incident occurred 30-10-2024 but not reported until 7-2-2025. One-to-one with Manager clarified this should be recorded as a Near-Miss.	Employee
26-2-2025 (Near Miss). Councillor reported stepping back from an item of furniture moved during a Council meeting and nearly falling down the step within the chamber floor.	Area assessed for installation of balustrade. Remedy not practicable currently.	Event was reported as an Accident / Incident but re-assigned as a Near-Miss as no injury or damage sustained.	Employee / Councillor

3.1.2 There were six incidents of unacceptable behaviour reported. One was received in person, one by e-mail and two via the telephone. One of the reports was received retrospectively after initially being reported as a Near Miss. Two reports were partner referrals.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR REPORTS Q4 2024 / 25			
Incident	Action	Note	Method
8-1-2025 Member of the customer service team abused and threatened with violence on the telephone.	Referred to the police		Telephone
10-1-2025 Referral of information on risk associated with known customer of Housing team. Abuse and threats received on the telephone from the same individual.	Support currently being offered to the customer by telephone only.		Not Applicable (N/A)
24-1-2025 (reported) Planning officer threatened with dogs whilst inspecting a site. Threat was verbal. Presence of dogs noted.	Officer withdrew from site.	Incident occurred 12-12-2024. Officer required clarification prior to report	In person
27-1-2025 Partner referral regarding a Police incident involving a customer known to the Housing Team.			N/A
21-2-2025 Customer Services Officers received abusive and aggressive call from a customer trying to pay council tax. Experienced by several officers.			Telephone

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR REPORTS Q4 2024 / 25			
Incident	Action	Note	Method
31-3-2025 Unpleasant e-mail received by planning officer alleging unprofessional conduct and dishonesty. E-mail shared with a wide audience.			e-mail

3.2 Health and Safety Actions

3.2.1 A number of actions are set out below. Work continues to progress these with all completed actions removed.

Subject	Action	Update / Progress
Emergency Procedures	(i) To revise and improve the fire and evacuation procedure at main MDC locations.	(i) Procedures still required for depot sites. Visitor procedure for parks depot now in place. (ii) Fire drill for Members completed.
Unacceptable Behaviour	(i) To revise the policy (ii) To improve system for reporting Unacceptable behaviour	(i) Created system for comment and trial use. System modified based on user comments. To be implemented. (ii) Efficiency review of computer app to improve the reporting process and availability.
Health and Safety (H&S) Training	(i) To determine H&S training requirements (Corporate and Teams)	(i) Training requirements determined. Corporate-wide training now scheduled. Department-specific training awaiting implementation. (ii) Completion of H&S E-learning now to be reported via balanced scorecard. Practical training to be tracked via training matrix.
Risk Assessment	(i) To implement a new risk assessment register / master list	(i) Central list for all risk assessments in use, received and documents saved. Additional risk assessments required have been identified as part of the exercise and are in progress. (ii) Corporate risk assessments in

Subject	Action	Update / Progress
		preparation alongside newer drafts of corporate policies/procedures <i>Reiterated as part of recent audit finding.</i>
Lone Working	(i) To revise lone working procedure and to ensure implementation of appropriate hardware to support these measures.	(i) Details of revised procedure agreed. Report required concerning additional resources.
Audit / Inspection	(i) To ensure service teams and work locations across MDC is in compliance with H&S Legislation	(i) Mini audit of Parks and Maintenance depots now required. Scheduled for summer. (ii) Observation of working practices to be established by teams. Tools provided. Exploring potential use of computer applications to improve process and accessibility of the tools. <i>Reiterated as part of recent audit finding.</i>

3.3 Health and Safety Groups

- 3.3.1 The Senior Managers group continues to meet every six weeks to progress and review performance on health and safety. Efforts have been made to improve accountability and the tracking of actions raised to this group. Routine updates from each service area are also proposed.

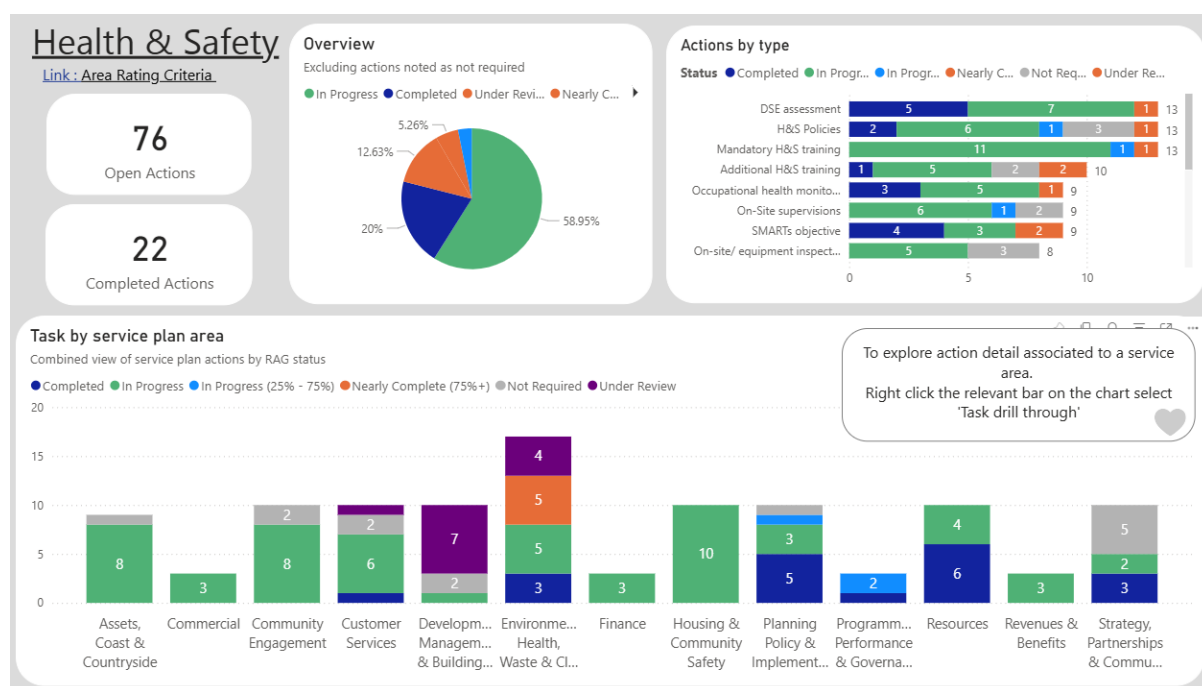
3.4 System Resources

- 3.4.1 Work continues to improve health and safety performance in a number of service areas. Without additional budget, it is becoming apparent departments will struggle to achieve some of the improvements that are required. In addition, it is recognised that a central health and safety budget would allow corporate issues and/or those that require a co-ordinated (or expedited) approach to be tackled more effectively. Members are being made aware of this as a report requesting a ring-fenced health and safety budget is being drafted.

Table of Departmental Health and Safety Activities vs Risk Grading

Risk Level	H&S Policies	Mandatory H&S training	DSE assessment	Risk assessment	SMARTs objective	Additional H&S training	On-site/ equipment inspections	On-Site supervisions	PPE issued where needed	Occupational health monitoring requirements
Low	✓	✓	✓	Under remit of Corporate H&S RA's	H&S objectives available for use					
Medium	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
High	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Department defined performance against each assigned Health and Safety activity



3.5 Fire Risk Assessments

- 3.5.1 A contractor is continuing to progress its review of fire risk assessments for the main offices and other MDC assets. Some of the reports have now been received and the action points are being assessed. An evacuation drill was performed for Members at the Council meeting on 3 April 2025. This was outside of the reporting period but work to plan this fell within the quarter. A report collating feedback of those involved has been produced.

3.6 Policies and Procedures

- 3.6.1 A revised Health and Safety Policy requested by the Strategy and Resources Committee has been finalised. Member Health and Safety Representatives have been asked to contribute to a section outlining their own health and safety arrangements.
- 3.6.2 Efforts are underway to review and update all corporate policies and procedures that have expired. Those requiring minor amendments are largely completed, whilst those requiring more significant changes are being reviewed by policy Working Groups.

3.7 Health and Safety Inspections

- 3.7.1 No formal scheduled health and safety inspections were conducted in the period. Mini audits of the depots, to be conducted by the H&S Manager have been agreed with the Head of Assets Countryside and Coast. These will be conducted in the summer and will examine progress made since the previous inspections.

3.8 Legionella

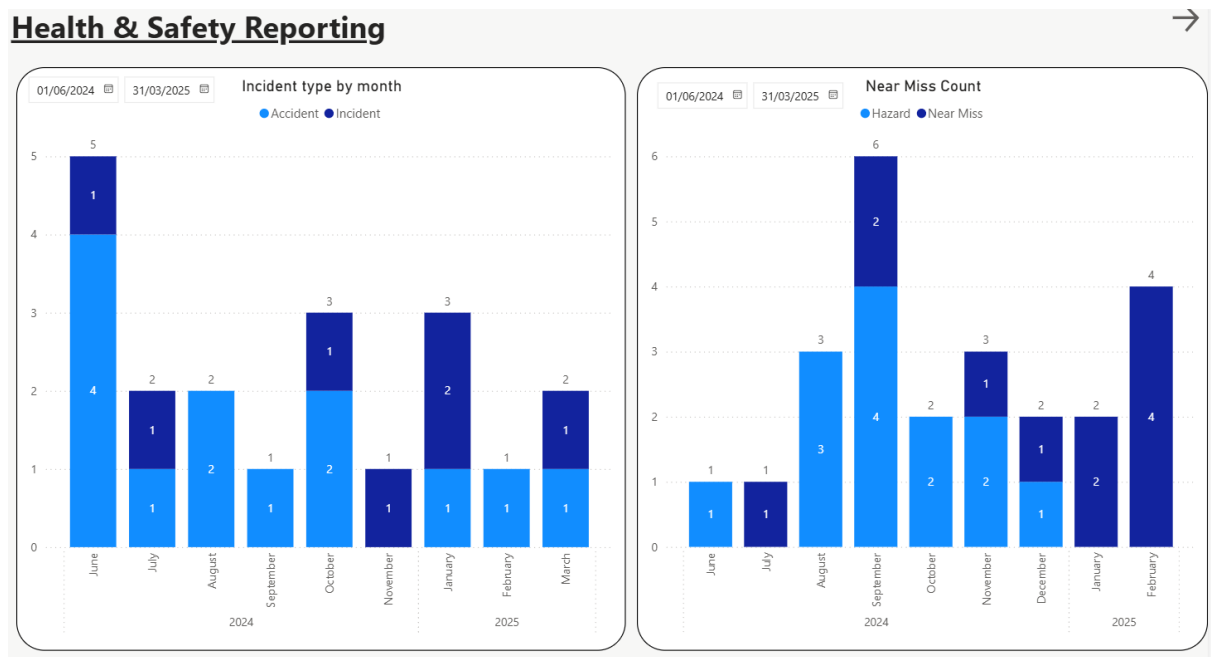
- 3.8.1 The Council's contract with its current provider was renewed and works continue as per its normal schedule. Scope to allow for the sampling and testing of legionella has now been included.

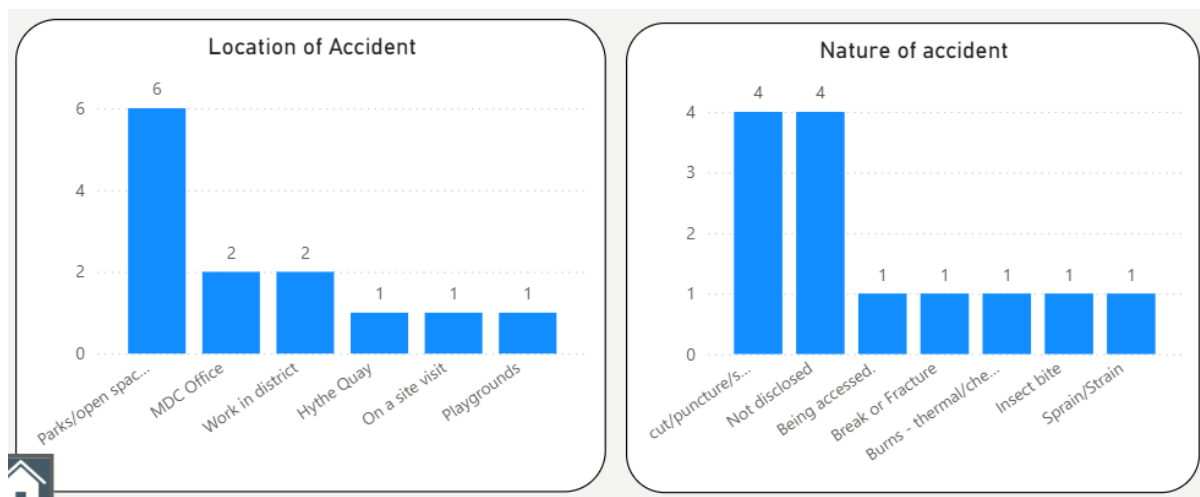
3.9 Training

- 3.9.1 No corporate practical training sessions were completed in the period. Corporate training is planned for Manual Handling and Ladder Safety with refresher sessions for Lone Working, Fire Warden and potentially, dealing with violent and aggressive behaviour. Toolbox talks for the Service Delivery teams have been suspended and await team input before resumption.
- 3.9.2 The e-learning training modules for health and safety are now available on Connect & Learn. Two priority training modules (Health and Safety Induction and Fire Safety) have been scheduled with completion rates monitored via the monthly balance scorecard. Two other modules (Display Screen Equipment and Dealing with Violence and Aggression) will be scheduled for later in the year. All other training modules have been assigned to relevant staff groups and agreed with managers. Discussion regarding the roll-out of these are continuing.

3.10 Accident-Near Miss Reporting

- 3.10.1 The number of accidents reported was low over the period, with one per month recorded. The number of Hazards and Near Misses reported was in keeping with previous reports, however none were recorded in March.





3.11 Health and Safety Audit [Audit Actions 2024-2025 doc](#)

- 3.11.1 There were four targets for completion in the period. These concerned the cataloguing of risk assessments, update of the Health and Safety Policy, review of the training matrix and creation of an events checklist.
- 3.11.2 All risk assessments have been recorded on a central register and are in the process of being reviewed and updated by Head of Service / Managers. Approximately 80% are complete with the remainder in draft. The requirement for a small number of additional risk assessments has also been identified via this process.
- 3.11.3 A comprehensive events checklist was created for monitoring health and safety compliance of event organisers. The checklist is being trialled to determine if any refinements are required. The events team are simultaneously considering the use of proprietary software to assist in the management of events data. It is anticipated that the checklist will form part of this process.
- 3.11.4 The Health and Safety Policy, which was revised prior to the audit, has been updated to reflect Member comments regarding its writing style. This revision is now complete but awaits further Member input regarding a section on their health and safety. It is hoped that the policy can be submitted to the Strategy and Resources Committee for approval in the coming months.

3.12 Priorities going forward

- 3.12.1 The priorities for the next quarter will be to continue to focus on tasks set out in the Audit Action Plan including work to review, and revise where necessary policies and risk assessments. Work will continue on improving visibility and accountability for health and safety in work teams by ensuring that progress is monitored and reported through the Health and Safety Managers Group, Corporate Leadership Team plus (CLT+) and the Performance, Governance and Audit (PGA) Committee.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Accidents, near misses and incidents of unacceptable behaviour during Q4 2024 / 25 have been set out within this report.
- 4.2 Proactive work on the main health and safety themes continues and good progress is being made.

- 4.3 Additional health and safety improvements will continue to be implemented alongside close-out actions arising from the recent health and safety audit.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027

5.1 Provide good quality services

- 5.1.1 Good health and safety management of the workplace, for example, management of asbestos and legionella, helps provide a safer and healthier environment in which to live and work.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Good health and safety management reduces the number of accidents and injuries to both customers and employees alike. Reduced staff absence resulting from work related injuries or ill health ensures a better service is provided to customers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – Poor management of health and safety can lead to accidents, injuries, occupational ill health or dangerous occurrences. This may result in avoidable sickness absence and these incidents may be investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This could result in prosecution with fines or custodial sentences and an award of costs if found guilty by the courts. In addition, the HSE has adopted a “Fee for Fault” policy in which it recharges the cost of investigations if liability is identified. Civil claims by individuals could lead to significant cost to the Council, both financial and resources to manage. These could in turn lead to increased insurance premiums. It can also lead to poor publicity, reputational damage and impacts on staff morale.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – No additional resources required, however, by managing health and safety, there should be less impact on financial resources as identified in (iii) above.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – No additional resources are required, however, additional processes / procedures to manage health and safety effectively will impact upon current resource capacity. The positive impact should be preventing accidents and ill health, having a mitigating impact.

Background Papers: None.

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